

Ramadan Kareem.

On behalf of President Bush and the American people, I wish to send the warmest greetings to all Palestinians in Gaza who celebrate this holy month. I am pleased to use the medium of the internet to be able to greet the residents of Gaza during this important time

At this important time of year, I want to emphasize the special and important relationship between the American and Palestinian people. The United States is committed to helping you realize an independent, democratic state of Palestine, living in peace and security. This is the vision expressed by President Bush, and the fervent hope of Secretary Rice and her team, who are working hard towards this objective.

I know this is a challenging time for you in Gaza. As Secretary of State Rice has stated, the US Government is “not going to abandon the Palestinians who are living in Gaza” and will continue to provide you with assistance. True to this promise, the U.S. government continues to provide the people of Gaza with food aid and health care and education support.

The American people greatly respect the traditions and values of reflection, humility and charity that are integral to Ramadan. Each year, I am pleased to participate in activities sponsored by the U.S. Consulate General for Palestinian audiences in celebration of Ramadan. These include iftars, cultural events, and charitable activities. The Islamic values of tolerance and understanding, and traditions of compassion and kindness are shared by Americans of all faiths, including millions of Muslim Americans.

In the Ramadan spirit of reaching out to friends and neighbors, I wish to invite you now to explore our Virtual Consulate website especially designed for the people of Gaza. With this website, the US Consulate General in Jerusalem wishes to provide an opportunity for an exchange of ideas and dialogue between Americans and the Gazans. Each day during this special month, we will post information about our participation in the celebration of Ramadan. For you in Gaza, we plan to host a series of Ramadan events including web chats and a website contest. I hope you will join us for those.

Again, I wish you a Ramadan Kareem.

